

City of Portland, Oregon - Bureau of Development Services



1900 SW Fourth Avenue • Portland, Oregon 97201 • 503-823-7300 • www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

Permit Research

This handout is designed to make researching the permit history on your property an easy task.

First:

• Determine what information you need. Be specific to get the information you are seeking.

Start your research online:

- 1. Go to www.portlandoregon.gov/bds
- 2. Click the **Permit/Case** search button located in the lower left corner of the screen.
- **3.** Type in your address to view a list of current permits.
 - The information available online is only for permits obtained after January 1, 2000.
 - Additionally, the task bar is the same as what you will find in Portlandmaps.

You can also look at *www.portlandmaps.com* which will have the same permit information.

- You can get to Portlandmaps via the Quick Link on the BDS home page or by typing www.portlandmaps.com into the address bar.
- 2. Enter the property address into the search bar. Initially you will receive the **Property map** view, but the task bar above offers several options. To look at the **permit history**, click on the **Permits/Cases**.
 - The information contained here is the same as that on the BDS web site. This information is NOT the
 entire permit history and will only show permits that were obtained after 2000.



- 3. Another useful research tool in Portland Maps is the **Maps** option on the task bar. Select **Maps** and then select **Photo** (the Photo selection is not offered in the Permit view). For the purpose of researching possible non-permitted additions, the aerial photos can be very helpful.
 - The other useful function of this mode is that you also access aerial photos from the previous five years. This may show work performed without permit from year to year.
 - While this is a popular source of information, the information contained on the site regarding the number of bedrooms, bathrooms, etc., may not reflect what has or has not been legally built or installed under permit.

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PERMIT RESEARCH 1

The Permit / Case Search button and

the Quick Link to Portland Maps on

the BDS home page

Continue your research at the Development Services Center (DSC):

- The DSC is located at 1900 SW 4th Avenue, 1st floor.
- In the DSC, go to the Resource and Records
 Counter. If you are not familiar with the DSC, ask
 for directions at the front desk.
- At the Resource and Records counter, ask the staff what you need. This is a critical step because you need to define your scope of work (if you performed the work, this step is easier).
 - For example, you are a new homeowner and you want to know if the bathroom in the basement of the house was installed under permit.
- 3. Staff will research plumbing and electrical records as well as the building records.
 - There may be drawings on file for work done after 1976.

Now that you have the permit history:

- **1. Meet with BDS plan review staff.** They will interpret the permit history and help you decide what direction you would like to go with your project.
 - Plan Review staff, will usually open an **inquiry folder** to help document the permit history, information, and options that were discussed in your meeting. This is helpful if the customer comes back to the DSC at a later date and is unable to speak with the same Plan Reviewer.
- 2. To legalize work done without permits you must define your **scope of work**, list what was done, include all details even if you think what was done did not require a permit. (i.e. converted basement room into bathroom, 1 toilet, 1 sink, 1 shower, re-framed room, added overhead light, etc).
- 3. You may need to draw plans detailing the work that you need to legalize (see BDS brochure #6, What Plans Do I Need for a Building Permit?) This is available online at www.portlandoregon.gov/bds | select the Applications/Handouts tab > Permits and Inspections > Plans-What Plans Do I need for a Building Permit.
 - If you purchased the property and want to legalize work done under prior ownership, you will need to go through the same permitting process as if it was new construction.
 - All work being legalized will have to meet the minimum code standards from the current code.
 Each case may be evaluated on a case by case basis.

 Although you may not have been the homeowner when work was done on your home, as the homeowner it is your responsibility to remedy the situation.

Remember, once the permit is issued, your project won't be considered legal until the permit receives final approval.

Helpful Information

Bureau of Development Services

City of Portland, Oregon 1900 SW 4th Avenue, Portland, OR 97201 www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

General Office Hours:

Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm BDS main number: 503-823-7300

Permit Information is available at the following location:

Development Services Center (First Floor) For Hours Call 503-823-7310 | Select option 1

Permitting Services (Second Floor) For Hours Call 503-823-7310 | Select option 4

Important Telephone Numbers

| BDS main number | 503-823-7300 |
|---|-----------------|
| DSC automated information line | 503-823-7310 |
| Permit Information (electrical, mechan plumbing, sewer, and sign) | • |
| Building code information | |
| Site Development Services & Sanitation | on 503-823-6892 |
| Zoning Information | 503-823-7526 |
| Permitting process | 503-823-7357 |
| Permit resources and records | 503-823-7660 |
| Residential (1 & 2 family dwellings) | 503-823-7388 |
| Neighborhood Inspections | 503-823-7306 |
| BDS 24-Hour Inspection Request Line | 503-823-7000 |
| City of PortlandTTY | 503-823-6868 |

For more detailed information regarding the bureau's hours of operation and available services;

Visit our Web site www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

Note: All information in this brochure is subject to change.